



**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH**



AUGUST 12, 2003

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Medford Wins Silver Medal! Congratulations to WFO Medford for winning the Silver Medal! The Medford staff is recognized for their outstanding service to their customers in support of fire suppression activities during the summer of 2002. Southern Oregon had the most damaging fire season in 70 years with over 600,000 acres burned. During the summer, the WFO provided excellent watch, warning, and forecast services; provided daily briefings to coordinate meteorological support for wildfire suppression; supported a record breaking 16 IMET dispatches; and issued practice fire weather products for California in preparation for issuing official products beginning in 2003. Fantastic job Medford!

Fireweather Kudos:

WFO Boise: Kudos to the staff at Boise for some excellent work on July 26, 2003. Michael Stavish, the IMET on the Hot Creek Fire, had high praise for the support from Boise on Saturday July 26. Strong thunderstorms were approaching the fire and the Boise staff provided accurate information on the timing of the storms and the 30-50 mph wind gusts associated with the thunderstorms. The information was critical to the fire fighters and was greatly appreciated by the fire fighting community. On the very same day, the Boise staff also had to back up Pocatello with severe weather and flash flooding threatening. They also did an outstanding job providing warning and forecast services for Pocatello. Warnings were timely and verified well. It was a superb job by Paul Flatt, Valerie Mills, Tom Egger, Jeanne Allen, David Groenert, Coleen Decker, Jim Shadwick, and Les Colin. Thanks for a great team effort!

WFO Flagstaff: In another shining example of fire weather support, the staff at Flagstaff provided critical wind information that resulted in 200 firefighters being moved twice. Three thunderstorm outflow winds hit the Kinishba fire on July 15. The IMET from Flagstaff was enroute to the fire when the outflows occurred. Information provided by the office staff to the Incident Command resulted in lives being saved and again illustrates how important our mission is to support fire weather activities. The IMET later reported how thankful the people on fire were for "heads up" on the winds. Just a truly outstanding job Flagstaff!

WFO Medford: Another IMET, Eric Evanson, sent an e-mail to Medford thanking the staff for their help on the Kelsay fire Complex. Eric stated the staff was very supportive with respect to the fire weather operations and he enjoyed the

coordination and assistance. Another excellent job by Medford and shows why they won the Silver Medal.

Paul Hamilton: Paul has done an outstanding job supporting Western Region's fire weather program. Following closure of the Redding office, he relocated to WFO Sacramento to take on a special fire weather assignment. Paul began monitoring the fire weather products issued for California, and he provided expert advice and guidance to the servicing offices. He traveled to the WFOs in San Diego, Eureka, Medford, Oxnard, and Monterey. He provided a general staff briefing and worked closely with MICs, SOOs, and fire weather focal points to find ways to improve quality of the products and services. Paul's visits have been well-received and extremely useful. In addition to the excellent support during his office visits, Paul's daily quality control of fire weather products has been outstanding. While his focus is primarily California-related, he has offered assistance to offices not serving California fire weather customers. Thanks, Paul, for your outstanding work.

DEPUTY REGIONAL DIRECTOR



(l to r) Mesa Emergency Management Captain Jim Bloomer, Phoenix MIC Tony Haffer, and Mesa Fire Chief Beck during the city's recent Storm Ready ceremony

Mesa Obtains StormReady Status: The city of Mesa, Arizona, received the NWS StormReady Certification in a presentation by Phoenix MIC Tony Haffer to the Mayor and City Council on August 11. More than 90 Mesa residents were present to hear Mesa Fire Department Chief Beck explain to the city council what StormReady really means to the city and residents. The Mayor, Kino Hawker, who listens to NOAA Weather Radio, spoke of the NWS services, and congratulated the city servants who worked on the team to qualify Mesa as a StormReady city.

StormReady plaques were presented to Mayor Hawker, Chief Beck, and Mesa Emergency Management Captain Jim Bloomer. An official from the Maricopa County Emergency Management was also present at the ceremony.

Maricopa County Emergency Management played a role in the evaluation of the Mesa StormReady application, and are presently involved in a project to bring StormReady to unincorporated communities in the county. Mesa receives about 8 inches of rainfall annually and has a history of severe thunderstorms with damaging winds and brief, but intense, rainfall causing rapid flooding of washes. Mesa, population 440,000, is the second community within the Phoenix metropolitan area to receive this formal certification. Paradise Valley was the first, and received their certification earlier this spring.

WFO Pocatello Strikes Pay-dirt with Lightning Safety Posters: National Weather Service WCM Vernon Preston and ASA Donna Mills piggy-backed on the recent success of the national lightning safety and awareness campaign by contacting all the golf courses and country clubs in eastern Idaho. Managers were excited upon learning they were going to receive awareness posters with Rocco Mediate and Vijay Singh and planned to display them prominently in their club houses. Vernon teamed with some of his emergency manager partners and personally delivered posters to a few of the golf courses. In addition to the posters, copies of the NOAA/Red Cross "Lightning, Hail, & Tornado" brochure were placed in each club house. The NWS lightning safety Internet homepage was also highlighted. In addition to golf courses, Vernon and Donna mailed several copies of the Siri Mullinix Soccer Goaltender lightning safety poster to schools across eastern Idaho. Students in eastern Idaho will see this safety information when they return to school and participate in soccer leagues this fall.

WFO Seattle Participates in AMS Broadcasters Conference: NWS Forecast Office Seattle represented NWS at the AMS Broadcasters Conference in Seattle, Aug 8-11. A booth was set up to discuss NWS products and services with the broadcasters who were attending their annual professional conference.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: This weeks "Statement of the Week" is an excellent TAF written by Ryan Walbrun from the Monterey WFO. Ryan correctly predicted an early breakout of low clouds in his 12z TAF by detecting subtle differences in a normally stubborn stratus layer. Usually, a well established marine layer is strengthened by the approach of an upper level trough. However, the day Ryan was forecasting, the marine layer was not well established because there had been a series of shortwave troughs preventing a strong marine layer from developing. The San Francisco airport's busiest morning hours are between 17z and 19z. Predicting an early breakout of low clouds saved the airlines significant operating costs because they didn't have to carry extra fuel for an alternate airport. Excellent work Ryan!

FTUS80 KSFO 061145 RRK
KSFO 061139Z 061212 2500SKT P6SM SCT015
TEMPO 1216 BKN012
FM1630 27008KT P6SM FEW015
FM2000 29016KT P6SM SKC
FM0400 29008KT P6SM SCT012
FM0900 26006KT P6SM BKN010

METAR KSFO 061556Z 25014KT 10SM SCT020 18/14 A3005 RMK AQ2 SLP176
T01830139
METAR KSFO 061456Z 25014G18KT 10SM FEW010 SCT014 17/14 A3005 RMK
A02 SLP174 T01670139 53013
METAR KSFO 061356Z 26009KT 10SM FEW010 BKN014 17/14 A3003 RMK
A02 SLP170 T01670139
METAR KSFO 061256Z 26011KT 10SM BKN014 17/14 A3002 RMK A02 SLP165

T01670139
METAR KSFO 061156Z 26007KT 10SM SCT014 BKN200 16/14 A3001 RMK A02
SLP162 T01610139 10172 20161 53000

Aviation: Larry Burch (Salt Lake City CWSU MIC) was awarded "Member of the Year, 2002" of the Utah Civil Air Patrol, for his work as Director of Safety, Squadron Commander, and saving 3 lives in a plane crash. He received a nice plaque.

The Seattle ARTCC, including Seattle CWSU staff members John Werth, Rick Schulz, and Gene Jaffa, were named the National Enroute Facility of the Year for 2002. The award was presented on June 20, 2003.

Scott Dickson, forecaster at WFO Missoula was awarded the Individual 1st Quarter Aviation Award. Scott has done outstanding work in his office for his local aviation users and for the regional Aviation Program. He supports an intranet aviation webpage on station with office aviation references, verification statistics, and directives; and was instrumental in creating the webpage for the National Aviation Workshop held May 20th. However, most of all, Scott's local users have come to rely on Scott for aviation weather education.

Dan Gudgel, WCM at WFO Hanford, participated in the Return to Kitty Hawk race held late June through early July. On his own time, Dan flew a tow-plane for the gliders and provided advice and guidance to the planners of the Kitty Hawk race using his experience as both a forecaster and as a pilot.

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

American Association of State Climatologists Conference: The American Association of State Climatologists (AASC) held their annual conference in Portland, Oregon, August 5-8, 2003. The National Weather Service sent several representatives to the conference, including the Regional Climate Services Program Managers from WR, SR, CR, and ER. The AASC membership was enthusiastic about partnering with the WFO and RFC Climate Services Focal Points.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

NWSTC, COMET, WDTB FY04 Course Sign up Period: All offices should have received an e-mail detailing instructions on signing employees up for the FY04 training courses at the NWSTC, COMET, and WDTB. In order to ensure sufficient notification for the early courses this autumn, nominees for FY04 are due to WRH SSD by August 26, 2003. Final attendees will be published by September 8, 2003.

Chelsea Leader has re-designed the Western Region Idea Sharing Homepage. Please take a look at the new format at <http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/ssd/ideas.html>.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

NWR: The Burley, Idaho (WNG-605) and Ukiah, CA (WNG-593) USDA funded NWR transmitters were turned on last week and will become official in August 2003. The Burley Idaho transmitter was installed by Joe Lachacz and Bryan Tilly (PIH). This brings the FY 2003 total to 14.

Residents and visitors of Grant County, Oregon, can now stay on top of storm activity through a direct link to NOAA National Weather Service forecasters in Pendleton. The new broadcast of NOAA Weather Radio came on line effective August 11 and can be heard on receivers using a frequency of 162.500 MHz from a transmitter located on Fall Mountain 10 miles southwest of John Day, Oregon. The John Day NOAA Weather Radio is a cooperative effort between the NWS and the U.S. Forest Service Malheur National Forest and provides vital inclement weather warnings considering the amount of outdoor activities that occurs in the region.

AWIPS: AWIPS OB2 installs are underway. Several WR sites have already installed OB2. The NCF is supporting five (5) OB2 installs per day through the end of the fiscal year (September 30). Funding issues may force the NCF to reduce the number of OB2 installs to three (3) per day starting October 1, 2003. The NCF is encouraging sites to install OB2 prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Facilities: The summer months continue to be very busy for Facilities. The Facilities Staff have completed a number of new installations. The Mitsubishi UPS replacement at Great Falls WFO was completed. The installation of new (or replacement) instrumentation towers at Toledo Washington, Cascade Locks Oregon, Beaumont California, Pigeon Point California, Glasgow Montana, and Great Falls Montana were all completed. Tower replacements are also scheduled for Flagstaff Arizona and Salem Oregon.

HVAC issues regarding the replacement of units at Davis RDA and Hanford RDA are proceeding. Additionally, we are looking to test a 6 ton HVAC system. If successful, we plan on utilizing the 6 ton units as replacements for the 5 ton units at the RDA sites. And lastly, Bob Kinsinger is working with the ROC to develop a new duct work design for the dual thread sites. We plan on testing this design at the SLC 88D. The POC for these actions is Bob Kinsinger.